(The) Arlington Place
331 Cotton Avenue, S.W.
Birmingham, Alabama
JEFFERSON Co

HABS No. ALA-424

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ALA
37- BIRM
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
DISTRICT NO. 16

Historic American Buildings Survey
E. Walter Burkhardt, District Officer
Auburn, Alabama

"ARLINGTON PLACE"
331 Cotton Avenue, S.W.
Birmingham, Jefferson County, Alabama.

Ownership:

Present Owner: Mrs. Alexander S. Munger.

Previous Owners: William S. Mudd.
R. S. Munger.

Date of Erection: 1842.

Architect: Unknown.

Builder: William S. Mudd.

Present Condition: Exoellent.

Number of Stories: Two.

Materials of Construction: Two story square frame; four large rooms to each floor; wide porch to the front with six square columns supporting a projecting roof; wooden balustrade to seoond floor level; exterior ohimneys.

Other Existing Records:

See: "HISTORIC HOMES OF ALABAMA & THEIR TRADITIONS"
By Alabama Members of National Pen Women.

Additional Data: "Arlington ", The Munger Mansion, 331 Cotton Avenue, Birmingham, Alabama. Built in 1842 by William S. Mudd, is surrounded by a beautiful garden in which are planted many rare plants, flowers and magnificient trees. In years gone by these trees were carefully tended by an Indian tree doctor, Longfeather.

The old carriage house became a garage which housed the second automobile in Birmingham, a two cylinder Winton, still owned by the Munger family.

The mansion is a square frame house with four large rooms on each of the two floors, across the front is a wide porch on which are six large square columns supporting a projecting roof. A latticed porch is at the second floor level, The entrance is through a paneled front door to a central hall, a drawing room is decorated in rose, ivory and gold, at each end of this room mirrors in carved frames reach the ceiling. Here, too, is a gold clock set on an hour-glass shaped base, this clock is wound annually on the birthday of the late R. S. Munger. Mr. Munger was the former owner, his daughter, Mrs. Alexander Montgomery and her family succeeding him as owners.

During the War Between the States, James B. Wilson, a northern general commandeered the house for military headquarters. Sentinels were posted to guard the house and grounds against marauders.

Source of Material: Mrs. Myrtle Miles.
Birmingham, Alabama.

Compiled by: Katherine Floyd.
Auburn, Alabama.

Approved: E. Walter Burkhardt, A. P. I.
Auburn, Alabama.

Date: 5-24-1937.

7/25/37

ADDENDUM TO
ARLINGTON
(Mudd-Munger House)
(Munger House)
Birmingham Industrial District
331 Cotton Ave., SW
Birmingham
Jefferson County
Alabama

HABS No. AL-424

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1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

ADDENDUM TO
ARLINGTON ~~HOUSE~~ PLACE
(Mudd-Munger House)
(Munger House)
Birmingham Industrial District
331 Cotton Avenue, SW
Birmingham
Jefferson County
Alabama

HABS No. AL-424

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37-BIRM,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington D.C. 20240

HABS
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ARLINGTON ~~HOUSE~~ PLACE
(Mudd-Munger House)
(Munger House)

This report is an addendum to the four data pages previously transmitted to the Library of Congress.

Location: Birmingham Industrial District, 331 Cotton Avenue SW, Jefferson County, Birmingham, Alabama.

Present Owner: City of Birmingham.

Present Use: Historic house museum.

Significance: The Arlington House, constructed in the mid-1840s by Judge William S. Mudd, is representative of a Greek Revival- style plantation house. It, moreover, is the last remaining antebellum house in Birmingham. It is also significant for its owners and their accomplishments in the Iron and Cotton Gin Industries.

Historian: Terra Klugh, HABS, 1997.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: ca. mid-1840s. William S. Mudd purchased the property in 1842, but the exact date of construction is unknown.

2. Architect: Not Known.

3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses: Until the property was purchased by the City of Birmingham in 1953, it served as a private residence. In the 1880s, Arlington House was used as an upscale boarding house.

Arlington was built on land that was first developed in 1820, when the United States Government granted the land to the Connecticut Asylum for the Teaching of the Deaf and Dumb. In 1821, the Connecticut Asylum sold the land to Jefferson County and in that same year the county sold the land to Stephen Hall, its first private owner.

Chain of Ownership[1] :

1 Catherine M. Lackmond, Arlington Reminiscences, (Birmingham-Jefferson Historical Society, 1985) 8.

1822, Property was first acquired by Stephen Hall, who came from Georgia to Elyton.

1842, William S. Mudd purchased the property at public auction and built "The Grove," later named Arlington.

1884, Property sold to Henry F. DeBardeleben, who never occupied the house. DeBardeleben sold 40 acres to the Alabama Great Southern Railroad.[2]

1886, Sold to Franklin H. Whitney of Iowa, the remaining 66 acres, who rented the house and outbuildings to boarders. Whitney conveyed tracts of land to W.L. Wilson, trustee, J.B. Vann, James B. Bruff, trustee, and James G. Whitney, trustee and assignee. James Whitney, sole executor for F.H. Whitney, sold the remaining 33 acres to Robert Munger.

1902, Sold to Robert S. Munger, a manufacturer, inventor, and philanthropist from Texas. Most of the renovations to Arlington where done by the Munger family, who added modern conveniences such as plumbing, electricity, and central heat. Structural work was done to the house to allow for such amenities.

1923, after Robert Munger's estate was settled, Munger's daughter, Rose Munger Montgomery, acquired the title to the land and house.

1953, the property and house were purchased jointly by a Birmingham group composed of individuals from different organizations, interested in the preservation of Arlington, and the City of Birmingham.

The Arlington House currently is open to the public as a museum, interpreted as a plantation house representing the antebellum period.

4. Builders, contractors, suppliers: Unknown, although its construction is thought to have been supervised by a builder from Tuscaloosa.[3] The evidence for this is that Tuscaloosa was the closest city and the Arlington House was influenced by architecture from this city.

5. Original plans and construction: The Birmingham News described the Mudd's home as being "built of solid hewn timbers, put together with wooden pegs." When it was finished it strongly resembled the appearance it has today. It was situated in a grove of oaks and hickories

2 Jimmy Calhoun, "Colorful history of stately old Arlington estate began in Connecticut in 1820," Birmingham News, February 8, 1953.
3 Daniel Brooks, interview by Author, July 1997.

which added to the beauty of the place.[4]

Originally, the parlor on the west side of the house was two separate rooms partitioned by folding doors. One was a formal parlor and the other a family parlor. The dining room still serves the same function, but the current music room was originally Judge Mudd's bedroom. The kitchen was separate from the main house; as interpreted today, it was "reached by a colonnade covering a wide graveled walk."[5]

The full-size porch on the second story of the facade was originally built by Mudd as "a small balcony [over the front door], enclosed by an iron balustrade."[6]

6. Alterations and additions: Popular opinion accounts for the expansion of Arlington House from a two-story, two room deep structure into its present form. Traditionally,

> it is believed that Mr. Mudd, in planning for his family's residence, soon realized the house was not large enough. He further saw that the solid construction details could be enhanced by an addition. He therefore constructed the East Wing to match the style of the west. The house faced north and adorned enclosed porches and spacious halls between the two wings. The original roof was removed and replaced with a new one over the entire structure.[7]

This theory alleges that Judge Mudd constructed an addition to Stephen Hall's house. Suggested by Lackmond is that Hall's house -- a two-story, two room deep structure with two exterior chimneys -- is the west wing of the present Arlington House. At first glance, the idea seems possible. The details of the chimneys and an interior 14" wall could have been the front facade of Hall's house. However, it would take physical examination (which would damage the historic fabric) to investigate this theory.

Some material evidence is readily visible, such as roof truss in the attic, and can provide answers without invasive procedures. At first glance, there appears to be two hipped roofs concealed under the current gable roof. Was one hip there from Hall's house and the other added by Mudd? Or did Mudd start with a different roof style then change to the current gable roof? These possibilities were discarded after investigation showed the materials used were consistent throughout the truss system. Circular and hand sawn marks were found on both sides, and similar sheathing is evident on both sides of an earlier roof. Most likely, this was originally a

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4 Calhoun, Birmingham News, February 8, 1953.
5 Ibid.
6 Alabama Members National League of American Pen Women, Historic Homes of Alabama and Their Traditions, (Birmingham Publishing Company, 1935) 222.
7 Lackmond, p. 2.

rare, but not uncommon, "M" roof.[8] An M roof gives the appearance from the front of a low pitched gabled roof. The back view is that of a double hipped roof with a valley between them. Concealed between the valleys on the adjacent side of the facade could have been a window to allow light into the central hallway.[9] A few examples of this roof- style are at His Lordship's Kindness in Prince George's County, Maryland, and the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond, Virginia.

A thorough investigation of the roof concludes that the previous roof was of one period not two. Looking from beneath the house, the floor joists also indicate the wings were built together and not in two periods, as the joists, sub flooring, and foundation are consistent throughout.

Other more obvious alterations were made during the Munger years. Another historical account describes this change:

> The small balcony over the door of the mansion was taken away, and an upstairs piazza built across the entire front. The partition between the double parlors was removed making one magnificent reception room. Both charming fireplaces were retained, the walls decorated with paper of the Colonial period, which the glass prismed chandeliers reflect in brilliant beauty. The veranda across the back of the house was enclosed with windows and charmingly furnished as a sun parlor, while the one above served as a screened in sleeping porch for the overflow of guests.[10]

The present office and dining area was moved by Munger from Cotton Avenue to what is believed to be the original foundation of the kitchen house. He used this space as a family room as well as a garage.

After Robert Munger's death, his daughter Mrs. Rose Montgomery inherited the house. During her and her husband's occupation a few changes where made. In adding up-to-date plumbing and central heat, a space had to be made between the two floors. This lowered the parlor ceiling to the height of the picture molding and increased the rise of the staircase to accommodate for new dimensions. The Montgomery's also removed the wall separating the two parlors and in its place added a steel beam to the ceiling for support.

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8 Carl R. Lounsbury, An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 236.
M roof is "a roof formed by the junction of two parallel gable roofs with a valley between the back of the first and the front of the second roof. Such roofs were popular in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as a means of spanning deep buildings."
9 Travis McDonald, interview by author, January 7, 1998.

10 Alabama Members National League of American Pen Women, p. 227.

Once the house became property of the city, still more changes were made. The new owners made alterations to the house and grounds for museum use. Viewing panels were added in the Music room so that visitors could see the structural system of the wall and floor. A reproduction of an antebellum kitchen was constructed behind the house, as it would have been during that period. Alterations were made to the clubhouse to include gift shop and dining room. The back porches, which at one time had been closed in by the Munger family, were returned to their original open design.[12]

B. Historical Context

1. Occupation and Events

The land and area that surrounds what is now Arlington House was originally "deeded by Captain William Ely to the newly created Jefferson County."[13] As an agent for the Deaf and Dumb Asylum in Hartford, Connecticut, he came to Alabama with the intent of building a school on the present site of the house. Originally know as Frog level, the State Legislature renamed the area Elyton in honor of Captain William Ely. Once Elyton was incorporated, it was established in 1820 as the seat of Jefferson County. At this time the courthouse was removed from Carrollsville, near the present Town of Powderly, to the more centrally located Elyton. This is where it remained until Birmingham was founded. An early report on courthouses in Alabama describes the placement of Elyton:

> Elyton was the crossing place of two important stage lines connecting north and south Alabama and eastern and western parts of the state. Later progress brought the crossing of two railroads to this area and it was this connection which led to the creation of the City of Birmingham.[14]

Two portions of the original land grant were purchased by William O. Tarrant on February 19, 1821, and John Burford, Jr. & Sr., on March 5, 1821. One year later in 1822, Stephen Hall purchased both, constituting approximately 475 acres of land.

Stephen Hall had established a plantation on this land, where he erected "a dwelling house and outhouses." Lackmond stated that his house consisted of two rooms downstairs and two rooms above facing east toward Elyton. The porches [front] were plain. Steps to bedrooms were on the outside of the building, [a feature traditionally understood to be] a clever method used to circumvent property taxes imposed on landowners based on the number of stairs inside

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12 Lackmond, p. 7.
13 National Society of Colonial Dames of America, Early Courthouses of Alabama prior to 1860, (Mobile: Jordan Printing Co., 1966).
14 National Society of Colonial Dames of America.

the house.[15]

In his will Stephen Hall left the plantation including, the dwelling house, a blacksmith shop and tools plus other items to his son, Samuel W. Hall. During his life time, Samuel Hall, accumulated debts, and thus by court order from the bank of the State of Alabama, the land was sold at public auction in 1842. The property was purchased by William Mudd, and renamed "The Grove."

Born in Jefferson County, Kentucky in 1816, he moved to Elyton in 1831, and began building a life for himself in Jefferson County, Alabama. He was a prominent lawyer, legislator and circuit judge. He also became known as "one of the successful pioneers of Jefferson County, Alabama," for his help in founding and developing the City of Birmingham. He became involved in the incorporation of Birmingham when he and others formed the Elyton Land Company (where he served as a member until his death). He also played a crucial part in the building of the first hotel in Birmingham and in the founding of the Citizens Bank and City Bank of Birmingham in 1880.[16]

During the Civil War, areas around Elyton were major contributors to the making of iron for armament and munitions. In an industrial history of the Birmingham District, Marjorie Longnecker White writes that,

> Between 1862 and 1865, thirteen blast furnaces and a major armament were built in Alabama, with the Confederate government advancing most of the necessary funds. Based on the map and geological facts set forth by Michael Tuomey's 1850 survey, the Confederate government awarded substantial contracts to three operations in Jefferson County. In 1863, William Sanders received a large contract to provide an additional furnace and houses for 600 slave workers at Tannehill. With three furnaces in blast, Tannehill became a major Confederate supplier, producing more than 20 tons of iron a day. Two additional iron-making ventures sprung up almost overnight in Shades Valley, to the south of Red Mountain, and Oxmoor and Irondale. The first new furnace operation went into blast in 1863 at Oxmoor. It was built by the Red Mountain Iron and Coal Company, two of whose investors, Frank Gilmer and John T. Milner, were actively engaged in building the Alabama Central Railroad into this area.[17]

General Wilson and his Union soldiers stormed through Alabama near the end of the in

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15 Lackmond, p.1.
16 Thomas McAdory Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, vol. IV, (Spartenburg, SC: The Reprint Company, 1978), 251.
17 Marjorie Longnecker White, The Birmingham District: an Industrual History and Guide, (Birmingham Historical Society), 41.

an effort to destroy all of Alabama's resources. Historian Malcolm C. McMillan describes this march:

> His [Wilson's] main objective was Selma, the great ordnance and manufacturing center of the confederacy, but he was to destroy textile mills, iron furnaces, and all military establishments in his path. He destroyed many iron furnaces as he moved through Alabama's mineral belt. . . As he moved through the "sterile section of North Alabama," he moved in three columns some miles apart in order to secure forage and deceive the enemy. On March 27 the columns concentrated at Jasper, and moved on through Elyton (now Birmingham) to Montevallo, meeting no resistance other than small groups of General P.D. Roddey's command. At Elyton, Croxton's brigade was dispatched to capture Tuscaloosa and burn the bridge across the Warrior River.[18]

March 28, 1865 entry from a calveryman's journal reads, "Elyton, Alabama, General Upton marched with the advance guard. Halted the command on a plantation of a rich old southerner who owns the whole magnificent valley."[19] Arlington, in 1865, during the closing days of the Civil War, was commandeered by Union General James H. Wilson. He established Arlington as his headquarters, and from here he issued orders to his cavalrymen to burn the University of Tuscaloosa and to destroy the iron furnaces at nearby Oxmoor and Irondale and the Confederate arsenal at Selma. According to Atkins, "Wilson's raiders burned Lamson's Flour mill at Black Creek on their way into Elyton, and the Oxmoor and Irondale furnaces as they were leaving. These pig iron furnaces were the most important military industries in the county."[20]

There are many speculations as to why Arlington House was left undisturbed. In a 1953 article, the Birmingham News recounts the confederate side of the story of General Wilson's encampment:

> While at the Mudd residence General Wilson and his staff occupied the downstairs rooms, and Mrs. Mudd and her children occupied the rooms upstairs. The Judge was away at the time. The Northern general was very courteous and considerate of the Mudd household in that he posted sentinels to guard it from marauding soldiers under his command.[21]

With the end of the war and the emancipation of slaves, southern plantation owners

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18 Malcom C. McMillan, The Alabama Confederate Reader, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1975), 405.
19 E. N. Gilpin, The Last Campaign: A calveryman=s Journal, (Kansas: Press of Ketcheson Printing Company), p. 632.
20 Atkins, p. 39.
21 Calhoun.

looked for new sources of income. Mudd and other local business men formed the Elyton Land Company in 1871 and began planning for a new city--Birmingham. The name Birmingham came from the great industrial city of Birmingham, England. The Elyton Land Company was formed with Mudd as a shareholder. Their declaration read, "We, whose names are subscribed to this declaration, being desirous of forming an association for buying lands and selling lots with a view of location, laying off and effection the building of a city at or near the present town of Elyton, and of becoming incorporated, . . ."[22]

In 1872, Henry F. DeBardeleben appeared on the Birmingham scene, playing a leading (and dramatic) role in the development of the district's store of ore and coal. He arrived from Prattville and assumed the presidency of the company, operating the Oxmoor furnaces. Though still in his early thirties, young DeBardeleben displayed great energy and enthusiasm. It was he and his associate, T.T. Hillman, who built Alice Furnace and first proved the value of iron made in Birmingham from its own resources of coal. In 1886, he founded the coal town of Bessemer.[23]

Born in 1840, Henry Fairchild DeBardeleben spent his first ten years in Autuaga County. When his father died in 1850, his mother moved the family to Montgomery. Over the next six years Daniel Pratt, an old friend of the DeBardelebens and Alabama's leading industrialist at the time, became Henry's guardian. At sixteen, DeBardeleben moved to Prattville where he attended school and eventually managed the mill in which Pratt made cotton gins. According to Ragan, "although opposed to secession, DeBardeleben joined the Confederate Army and served at the front line before being detailed to run the bobbin factory in Prattville for the Confederate government."[24] In 1862, he married Daniel Pratt's daughter, Ellen.

In 1872, Daniel Pratt and Henry DeBardeleben first showed their first interest in the Red Mountain and Coal Company. And with the loss of northern interest in financing the furnace, the two men took control of rebuilding Oxmoor Furnace. DeBardeleben admitted that Oxmoor was [his] first lesson in the iron business.[251] It was not a profitable venture, however, and without a working knowledge of the iron business DeBardeleben was forced to close Oxmoor furnaces.

The Oxmoor furnaces reopened in the fall of 1873 under new ownership. The Eureka Mining and Transportation Company of Alabama was now in charge. This time they used coke instead of charcoal to produce coke pig iron; "the experiment of making iron with coke seemed to every man in the district the last straw."[26] Production costs still ran high, and as a result the

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22 Henly, p. 22 and Caldwell, p. 4.
23 Henly, p. 67.
24 Ragan, p. 23.
25 Ethel Armes, The Story of Iron and Coal in Alabama, (Leeds: Beechwood Books, 1987), 239.
26 Armes, p. 261.

Eureka Company started facing the same problems DeBardeleben had faced. Judge Mudd, finding promise in the furnace, invested his time and money, in the operations for a few months. Judge Mudd chaired a meeting of local men to discuss the future of Oxmoor furnaces. Together they organized the Cooperative Experimental Coke and Iron Company, taking over where Eureka had started. According to Henly, Mudd advanced $30,000 and Colonel James W. Sloss, Charles Linn, and Mudd were elected as Board of Managers.[27] As historian Ethel Armes put it, their personal fortunes, and the life and death of the town of Birmingham, depended on the outcome at the Oxmoor furnace.[28] But they did succeed, and on February 28, 1876, coke pig iron was made.

DeBardeleben profited finally once iron makers saw the importance of the resources found on his land. "The ownership of the Oxmoor property had at length reverted to Henry F. Debardeleben, who now possessed the furnaces, and, as heir to Daniel Pratt, owned Red Mountain from Graces Gap to the town now known as Bessemer."[29] In January 1878, DeBardeleben, Sloss, and Truman H. Aldrich purchased extensive coal lands in Jefferson County and organized the Pratt Coal and Coke company, and with success, became the big names in the Birmingham Industrial District. With DeBardeleben's cotton gin background and Daniel Pratt's money, they built a railroad from their Pratt mining camp to Birmingham, with DeBardeleben putting his entire fortune into the company.[30]

A history of the Elyton Land Company described how the donation of land grew to become a promising furnace, under DeBardeleben's control.

> In August, 1879, the first rays of the rising sun of prosperity began to illumine the long darkened horizon of Birmingham and the Elyton Land Company, when it was announced that the Company had donated to Hillman and DeBardeleben twenty acres of land at the west end of the town upon which to erect a blast furnace. The public, however, who had so often been disappointed by reports of coming iron works which never came, were slow to credit this, until in the spring of 1880, work upon Alice furnace No. 1 was actually commenced. From the time work was begun on the Alice furnace, the population of Birmingham began slowly to increase and property to advance steadily in value.[31]

With the twenty acres donated by the Elyton Land Company to build the plant, construction of DeBardeleben's Alice Furnace began in period 1879-1880. As stated by Ethel Armes,

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27Henly, p. 65.
28Armes, p. 261
29Armes, p. 261.
30Atkins, p. 66.
31 Caldwell, The History of the Elyton Land Company, p. 14.

> . . . construction work began on the first furnace of the City of Birmingham-the one destined, as it turned out, to become in a few years, at the hands of George B. McCormack, a celebrated landmark in the story of steel as well as the story of iron. The work was begun September 29, 1879, and the furnace went into blast November 30, 1880. The plant was named for Colonel DeBardeleben's oldest daughter, Alice.[32]

H.F. DeBardeleben served as vice-president of the Alice Furnace Company.

DeBardeleben's last greatest iron venture for Birmingham came as a result of a collaboration with a Kentucky lawyer, William Underwood. The two constructed Mary Pratt Furnace (named for his daughter) which went into blast in 1883. This became the tenth well-launched venture of the coal and iron trade in the Birmingham District.[33]

In 1886, DeBardeleben found himself just outside of Birmingham thinking about steel production. It was this area, thirteen miles southwest of Birmingham, that he decided to establish a town, naming it Bessemer as a tribute to Sir Henry Bessemer, inventor of the famed steel-making system. What began as DeBardeleben's company's mining camp was incorporated as a city in 1887, under the Bessemer Realty Company, Henry DeBardeleben, President. DeBardeleben's company's mining camp became known as Bessemer and was incorporated as a city in 1887, along with the Bessemer Realty Company with Debardeleben as President. He bought many of the buildings from the New Orleans Cotton Exposition for use in Bessemer.[34]

"The steel enterprise was large in DeBardeleben's mind, but it got but one step further. He, with a Charleston cotton firm-Pelzer & Rogers-incorporated the Bessemer Steel Company, but never got seriously near making steel."[35] Although DeBardeleben never was able to produce steel as he had hoped, the city possessed many growing enterprises such as a rolling mill and cotton mill and so survived.

It was in 1884, in the midst of iron making, that Judge Mudd sold the Arlington estate to Henry F. DeBardeleben. Debardeleben never occupied the house, but purchased it as an investment. In 1886 after never occupying the estate, DeBardeleben sold the land and house to F.A. Whitney of Iowa. There is not much information about Whitney, except that he also to used the estate as an investment, selling off parcels of the land to start a neighborhood subdivision. However, he did "his part to preserve the old era by naming the house 'Arlington'

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32 Armes, p. 285.
33 Armes, p. 307.
34 Cruikshank, vol. 1, p. 347.
35 Ibid.

for General Robert E. Lee's home in Virginia."[36] For sixteen years Arlington was an upscale boarding house. Among its occupants was John Joseph Colmant, a landscape gardener, and his family.[37]

In 1902, Robert Sylvester Munger purchased the house as a summer home for his family. At the time, they were living in the Highland area of Birmingham. Later, when the city got to be too busy for Munger's taste, he decided to make Arlington his permanent residence. Originating from Texas, Munger was as a manufacturer and capitalist. He was best known for his role as vice president of two cotton machine manufacturing companies, the Munger Improved Cotton Machine Manufacturing Company of Dallas, and the Northington-Munger-Pratt Company in Birmingham (organized in 1892). He was also an inventor, holding many patents pertaining to cotton gin processing. The Munger System was considered the first in its field. He was the pioneer inventor of most of the improved gin machinery used throughout the south; Munger also shipped his machinery abroad.

Munger was born in Rutersville in Fayette County, Texas, July 24, 1864. At an early age, he became practically interested in the cotton business. By spending a lot of time around his father's lumber mill and cotton gin, he "saw the old methods of ginning with machinery that permitted the lint and dust to fill the air."[38] Wanting to save the health of others working in the gins, he devised a system of cotton ginning that would prevent lint from heavily burdening the air. This invention, known as the "Munger System," was the first of many inventions for the cotton industry. He became second to Eli Whitney as the greatest inventor of cotton ginning machinery. "Mr. Munger's gin patents upset lavorous methods, and gave a larger profit to the cotton growers. One hundred years after Whitney's cotton gin had become famous, Robert S. Munger received ten gold medals at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, for his inventions improving the antiquated methods of ginning cotton."[39] Around 1891, Munger came to Birmingham, Alabama, manufacturing city and cotton-growing state, leaving his cotton gins in Dallas, Texas, under the management of his brother, Stephen Munger. Here in Birmingham, with others, he organized the Northington-Munger-Pratt Company -- using the Munger System -- that in 1896 developed into the Continental Gin Company, of which he and his brother Stephen each served as president. It was not long before it became the largest cotton gin manufacturing company in the world.[40]

Munger married Mary Collet, daughter of Captain J.H. Collett of Austin, Texas, and the couple became the parents of eight children. He was a very active humanitarian and community

36 Lackmond, p. 4.
37 Lackmond, p. 5.
38 Alabama Member National League of American Pen Women, p. 226.
39 Ibid.
40 Atkins, p. 96.

leader. He led the movement to find a suitable site for the Y.M.C.A. building and was the President of this organization from 1901-1914. He was also an active leader in the local Methodist Church and donated much to Birmingham-Southern College (Methodist affiliated). As one historian describes Munger's character:

> Mr. Munger is a man of keen, incisive mentality and from a commercial standpoint has achieved a deserved success. He has also attained success in the esteem of those who know him. Democratic in manner, he mingles with his fellow men regardless of social or financial qualifications, and to his hundreds of employees whom he knows and calls by their given name, he is especially loved. He is one of the comparatively few whom success has not spoiled. To the public at large he is known for his numerous benefactions for the general good.[41]

After Robert Munger's death in 1923, followed by his wife's death in 1924, their daughter, Rose Munger Montgomery moved into the house. She and her husband lived there until 1943, but found living in the house to be too primitive. They were the last to use the estate.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Arlington House is representative of a Greek Revival style antebellum house, common in the south. It is a wood-clad, two-story house with a four-over-four room, central hall plan. The true form of one 1840s structure is still intact, with an exterior addition of a porch with a gabled portico added to the back. the interior was significantly altered at various times between 1902 and 1950, to meet the comfort needs of its owners and to keep it in style with the times. The interior of the house is currently furnished as it might have been in the antebellum period.

2. Condition of fabric: The current condition of the Arlington House is good. There are a few cosmetic details that stand out as needing repair: such as, the exterior window shutters which are hanging from their hinges and slats are in need of repair. Structurally the house seems to be intact. The interior is very well kept.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: This is a two-story, double pile, center passage dwelling, with a

41 Cruikshank, vol. 2, p. 136.

five-bay facade, measuring approximately 50' 4" x 39' 3".

2. Foundation: The foundation is constructed of native field stone laid in slabs supporting hand hewn beams. Updated climate controlled systems have been put in around the foundation. Newer brick piers help reinforce the flooring.

3. Walls: The walls are wood-clad with over lapping clapboards on the sides and flush boards on the facades of the house.

4. Structural system, framing: The house is of load-bearing wood framing with a steel beam added in parlor when the center wall was removed. There is a 14" north-south wall between parlor and hallway, supported by a 11" x 10" beam. The floor system is laid on hand hewn beams on top of field stone to allow for ventilation. Other floor supports are provided by 10" x 2-1/2" beams with pine sub flooring.

The roof frame consists of hand hewn, flat sawn, and circular sawn studs and joists. Cut nails are used throughout. The framing of the roof structure has been changed through the years. It looks to have once had a M style roof with a gable roof later added over it. The hip roof in the rear was added last, in the early 1900s.

5. Porticoes: A hexastyle two-story portico composed of square paneled wooden piers of the Doric order is located to the front of the house. The balcony is enclosed with a decorative balustrade. The back porch has a projecting back pedimented portico (which replaced a smaller one-story porch). This balcony was once screened-in and used as a sleeping porch. The gable front is shingled and has an air vent.

6. Chimneys: There are four exterior brick chimneys, two on the east and two on the west. The chimneys are not consistent in courses. The northeast chimney is 59-1/2" wide laid in five course common bond. Southeast and southwest chimney are approximately 60" wide laid in six course common bond. This suggests that they could have been built at different times. The northwest chimney, could be original to Stephen Hall period dwelling, is 67" wide with an inconsistent common bond.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The house has five exterior doorways, one each to the center of both floors of the north front and the south rear facades. There is also a door to the right of the rear door that enters into the dining room.

The front doorway is in the elaborate Greek Revival style, derived from Asher

Benjamin's Practical House Carpenter, plate 28. It is a wooden six-panel door with three-light side lights. Encasing the door and lights is an entablature supported by two pilasters decorated with an elongated Greek-key design.

The doorway to the rear of the house has a full light surround, with three-light side lights and six-light transom. The door has a simple wooden frame and flanked by plain pilasters.

The door to the right of this is a half-glass door with eight-lights (two pane width). Above the door is a three-over-three light transom.

The doors onto the balconies are six-panel, like those appearing at the main front and rear doorways. Unlike the main door, these doors have a full surround, with a six-light transom and three lights each side. The encasing is decorative corner blocks and fluted lintels and doorjambs.

b. Windows and shutters: The typical window is an elongated six-over-six double-hung sash. The window surrounds to the front of the house are three-part frames; lintel with plain corner blocks and fluted vertical members. The front sills project 5". The window surrounds on the rest of the house are plain with sills averaging 6" in width.

There are painted, louvered shutters secured by hardware on the window sill and on the clapboard walls of the house.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The roof is hipped with a projecting gable over the rear porch. Both are covered with standing seam copper and have metal gutters. There is a double gabled roof underneath the hipped roof that suggests a former M roof.[42]

b. Cornice, eaves: There is a box cornice around the main block with a plain entablature beneath it. There is a short copper seamed eave, with a gutter, below the back balcony and above the porch.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

a. First floor: The first floor of the house consists of a single-pile, center passage plan,

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42 Travis McDonald, interview by author, January 1998.

with a formal parlor to the west (once two rooms--an informal and formal parlor), a music room/study at the northeast corner, and dining room on the southeast corner. There are fireplaces centrally located on the east exterior wall in the dining room and study. The northwest parlor has the original fireplace and the northeast fireplace is plastered over. There are entries to the central hallway from the north and south part of the room. The stairway is on the east wall of the hallway, running south up to the second floor.

The entrance to the dining room was changed when the Munger's decided to enclose the area beneath the staircase to add a closet and a bathroom. In doing this, they added an arch from the hallway. The original door frame still exists, seen immediately upon entering the dining room from the alcove.

b. Second floor: The second floor follows the same plan as the first with bedrooms at all four corners. Fireplaces can be found centrally located on the east wall of the southeast bedroom, and on the west wall of the northwest bedroom (the southwest and northeast fireplaces have been covered over). There is a doorway in the center of the north wall in the southeast bedroom and south wall in the northeast bedroom that gives access to a late addition bathroom between the rooms. There is also a closet door to the west of the bathroom door in the southeast room. In the southwest bedroom there is a door on the north wall leading into a bathroom. According to the brochure that interprets the house, "the northeast bedroom displays a characteristic Munger touch: an archway spanning the hallway closet and a room closet creates an alcove at the entrance to this bedroom, reminiscent of the dining room entrance."

In the hallway are three doors leading into closet and utility space.

c. Attic: Entry to the attic is through a pull-down ladder, located to the right of the staircase on the second floor. The attic is peculiar and raises many questions as to the age of parts of the house. Underneath the hipped roof is a double gable roof. The average timber is hand hewn with a measurement of 7-3/4" x 3-1/2". The hipped roof seems to be covering an original M roof.

2. Stairways: There is a single-run stairway along the left wall of the main hall that rises twenty-one steps to the second floor. Rose M. Montgomery extended the staircase to allow for the heightened floor (due to added plumbing) on the south side of the second floor. The right side of the stairway has wooden balusters (painted) with a stained wooden handrail scrolled at the bottom end. The stairs are partially covered with a run of carpet held down by brass rods tipped with pineapple finials.

3. Flooring: The flooring was originally wide pine floorboards. Munger installed oak veneer flooring throughout with the exception of the dining room and study. These two rooms

have 2" tongue and groove flooring with a mahogany finish. Judging by the height of the rest of the floor, the veneer was placed over the original flooring . All floor boards including the veneer flooring run north-south. The original pine sub flooring still exists.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are of plaster (with horsehair) applied to riven lath. The music room and the southeast and northeast bedrooms are wallpapered. The ceilings are lath and plaster.

The first floor base molding averages 12" (an 8" base plus 4" decorative molding) and is consistent throughout the hallway, parlor, dining, and music rooms. The base molding in the parlor has the same profile, but with a shorter 7" base.

There is a picture molding in the hallway and dining room. The molding is 1-1/2" wide and in the hall is 8" from the ceiling. The walls and ceiling were altered during the Munger's occupancy. The ceiling in the dining room was raised by the Mungers to what was a fashionable height at the turn of the century. Where there was once a wall evenly dividing the parlor into two rooms, the Mungers installed an archway to expand the room. The Montgomery's later removed the wall entirely. To compensate for the lost support, a steel beam was added. The ceiling was lowered to conceal the beam.

Upstairs the base moldings are less elaborate and the profile is consistent throughout the rooms. The height varies, however. The base molding in the southeast bedroom is 6-1/2", the hallway has a 8-3/4" molding (5" base and 3-3/4" decorative) as does the northeast master bedroom. The southwest and northwest bedrooms are 8" and 9-1/2" respectively. There is a picture molding in the hallway, and in the northwest and northeast bedrooms.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The typical doorway on the first floor is encased with Greek Revival details consisting of paterae corner blocks, fluted lintels and doorjambs (6" wide by 3/4" projection). The original pocket doors in the parlor were replaced with hinged double doors by the Montgomery family. The doors are three panel and possibly were once the main exterior doors each cut in half to produce two double door entrance ways. Each door is encased with Greek Revival details consisting of paterae corner blocks and fluted lintels and doorjambs. There is a 14-1/2" paneled doorway into the parlor. There are three lights (matching the door) on each side and two above.

There is a levered door underneath the staircase into a closet, which was once a bathroom (installed by the Mungers).

Upstairs there are two half-levered half-full panel doors that enclose a closet and utility space. There is a more simplistic door casing on the second floor. The typical door casing consists of a 5" lintel and doorjamb mitred together at the corners. There are three modern sliding doors on the closet in the northeast (master) bedroom.

b. Windows: The moldings around the windows correspond with the doorways at each floor.

6. Decorative features and trim: Colonial Revival fireplaces replaced the original Greek Revival fireplaces. The only one that appears to be original is located in the Music room and consists of simple columns and a wide shelf. According to an Alabama historian, "the mantels, faced with black Italian marble, were of ivory painted wood, beaded and carved, the central design being a basket of fruit."[43] This is a description of the original mantels.

7. Hardware: The door knobs, changed in the 1940s by Mrs. Montgomery, are glass knobs with a brass plate, replacing the original ceramic doorknobs.

8. Mechanical Equipment:

a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Originally the house was heated by the fireplaces located in each room of the house. Today, the southwest fireplace on each floor has been plastered over as has the northeast upstairs fireplace.

Robert Munger added central heating during the years he occupied the house. Radiators can be found under the two south windows in the parlor. A furnace is located in the middle upstairs closet. There are two ceiling vents per room on the second floor, and floor vents on the first floor.

Air conditioning (a much later addition) was added to stabilize the temperature and humidity inside the house for museum purposes. The air conditioning unit is located to the exterior, west side of the house.

b. Lighting: Electricity was added by Munger, allowing for electric lighting. In 1953, the Birmingham News noted that "in each room there is a glass prismed chandelier with myriads of crystal."[44] These are still present. Antique lighting fixtures hang in the middle of every upstairs bedroom, in the upstairs hallway (two) and in the main hallway. There are also electric wall sconces in the Parlor. As indicated by Catherine Lackmond, "gas lamps and candles were

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43Alabama Member National League of American Pen Women, p. 223.
44Calhoun.

replaced with electric light fixtures."[45]

c. Plumbing: In the 1940s, the Montgomery's had plumbing installed upstairs. The floors were raised on the south end to allow for the pipes. Bathrooms were located between each pair of rooms on the east and west side of the house. Neither bathroom is open to the public, and except for the master bedroom, the doors to the bathrooms are concealed behind large bed frames. (The bathrooms are being used for storage and were inaccessible.)

"The most extensive renovation was arguably the installation of modern plumbing. Bathrooms were added between bedrooms on either side of the upstairs hallway. The floor in the back of the upstairs hallway was raised to make room for the plumbing that served both baths. Because of these changes, and the addition of closets, all four bedrooms are smaller than they were originally. Mr. Munger added a small washroom in the downstairs hallway, covering the space under the stairwell, extending it to the back door. Today these bathrooms are concealed to preserve the antebellum atmosphere and to house modern heating and air conditioning units."[46]

9. Original furnishings: There are very few if any original furnishings left in the house. The antebellum period furniture in the house was installed in an effort to interpret the house as it was during the Mudd's residence.

D. Site:

1. Outbuildings: The original brick kitchen has been reconstructed. It demonstrates how the kitchen might have looked in the nineteenth century with an open fireplace, and cooking pots and utensils surrounding the hearth. A path to the right of the reconstructed kitchen leads through the vegetable garden to a reconstructed carriage house. Both buildings are props for the interpretation of an antebellum estate.

The large structure connected to the main house with a covered walkway currently houses the offices of the museum employees, with an adjacent dining area. Robert Munger had this building moved from its previous Cotton Avenue address to the Arlington estate. The dining room section was originally Munger's car garage. (Munger was the first person in Birmingham to have a car.) The family later converted the garage into a clubhouse, and eventually it became an extra dining room.

2. Historic landscape design: Most of the documents found including the landscape plan, pertain to the Munger residency. Few articles describe the estate during the Mudd period. The

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45Lackmond, p.5.
46Lackmond, p. 5.

National League of Pen Women describe the Mudd's estate in the following excerpt:

> The carriage entrance to the grounds was through a double gate opening out on the big road, the one that led to Tuscaloosa, sixty miles away. A gravel driveway curved to the front porch. On the east side of the approach to the house was a beautiful sloping grove with oaks, hickories and other native trees, adding greatly to the attractiveness of the place. On the west side was a large shaded grass plat, which in the seventies was the croquet ground.[47]

It is said to be a southern tradition to plant a tree for each child that is born and often the tree is given to a daughter when she gets married. Judge Mudd planted water oaks, two for himself and his wife and then a tree for each child (ten children). Only seven of these oaks remain today. The Mudd's lawn was also said to be full of lilacs, alhea, and bridal wreath (a chinaberry tree).

The garden was a status symbol to Munger. It showed that he was well educated and well read enough to be familiar with architecturally designed gardens. An example of this is the list of magazines they subscribed to, one in particular was American Homes and Gardens.[48] Another importance of the garden was that it was an indication of ones wealth to be able to design and plant one such as this.

Old HABS photographs show the spacious nature of the grounds. Around the carriage house and out to the pergola, the yard was sectioned off into different gardens and planting areas. Boxwood hedges that exist now seem to be original. HABS documentation from the 1930s described the Munger house being "surrounded by a beautiful garden in which are planted many rare plants, flowers and magnificent trees."[49]

The Mungers and later Munger's daughter Mrs. Montgomery, did most of the landscaping. A gingko tree, brought from the former home on South Highlands, and a pink dogwood were Mrs. Munger's special favorites. Across the old-time croquet grounds a flagstone walk, designed by Mrs. Munger, lead through a garden of riotous bloom to a loggia, set with ferns, and furnished in willow with, brilliantly colored cushions. A large blue jar, a marble bench, an urn, and other garden furniture, added to the artistic effect.[50]

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47 Alabama Member National League of American Pen Women, p. 224.

48 Munger papers, Birmingham Library Archives.

49 HABS Report, May 24, 1937.

50 Alabama Member League of American Pen Women, p. 228.

Mr. Munger was responsible for planting over 100 papershell pecan trees. He also planted cottonwoods, red oaks, hackberries, and restored the line of water oaks at the front of the house. The Birmingham News stated that the Mungers planted shrubs and flowers of almost every kind and color which lined the south and west sides of the estate. Lackmond notes that after the Munger's years on the estate,

> The Montgomery's improved the grounds, adding the pergola at the west end of the garden as a charming summer house. Many parties displayed the hospitality of this family and helped enhance Arlington's reputation as one of the fine showplaces in the city. Mrs. Montgomery planted flowers and vegetables every spring and was always generous in sharing these with friends and neighbors. Her father had earlier planted pecan trees and the lower part of the grounds and called this area "The Grove." The drive was lined with white lilac bushes, and a beautiful manicured lawn completed the lovely setting. During this time the back porches of Arlington were glassed in, thus making a sleeping porch upstairs and a sun porch below. A porte cochere was built over the passageway from the big house to the carriage house, the same house that had accommodated Mr. Munger's Winton automobile.[51]

In an interview (conducted by Hill Ferguson) with Mary Brown Buckshaw Hodge and Ted Buckshaw (past employees of the Mungers), Mrs Hodge remembers that the formal garden in the western area of the front yard was already there [and also] remembers some of the plants, including the tall lilies. Mr. Buckshaw oversaw the dumping of wagonloads of fill applied to the low areas east of the house.[52]

Presently, there are four rows of boxwood lying perpendicular to a pergola. Behind these are separate vegetable and flower gardens. There is also a brick lined pond in this area that is a Munger addition. Boxwood, a common southern shrub, could be artistically formed or trimmed low, and could work as a barrier between different gardens. At Arlington House currently, they serve as walls partitioning the yard from the garden and channeling the visitors to the pergola.

The Munger's garden also contained a pergola, a very common garden structure during that period according to Landscape historian David Otwell. Two years earlier he had enclosed the garden north and west with an oak pergola and trellis, heavily clothed in summer with

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51Lackmond, p.6.

52Hill Ferguson Collection, Birmingham Public Library Archvies.

Wisteria, roses and vines.[53] Due to these features, the Munger's garden has been referred to as Edwardian.

The Edwardian garden seemed to be what you wanted to make it. George Plumptre's book on landscape gardens describes the Edwardian-style as "a more lasting garden style. [It] was established in England by Gertrude Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens because their work focused on the qualities of vernacular architecture, of local traditions and materials, and on fastidious plantsmanship.[54] This seems to describe Munger's garden well. Though stylistically laid out, it was casual in its plantings, some even designed as a garden of wild flowers. The Edwardian garden also mixed more formally laid out gardens with flower and vegetable gardens. Incorporated within was typically some type of garden structure such as a pergola. The garden could also consist of a plain manicured lawn, most likely surrounded or shaped by groups of trees or shrubs.

Also common was a Japanese garden, complete with the small pond.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Early views: Early views can be found at the Birmingham Library Archives, such as early 1900 views of the house, yard, and family. The HABS files contain a 1930s view of the house and yard.

B. Interviews: Daniel Brooks, Director of Arlington House and local historian, July 25, 1997.

Robert Gamble, Architectural Historian, Alabama Historical Commission, January 29, 1998.

Travis McDonald, Restoration Architect, Jefferson's Poplar Forest, January 28, 1998.

Tuscaloosa Co. Preservation Society 205-758-2238 (Jeff Mansell)

City of Tuscaloosa Heritage Commission 205-752-2575 (Betsy Hayship, Dir.)

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ADDENDUM TO
ENGINEERING PLACE
(Mudd-Munger House)
(Munger House)
Birmingham Industrial District
321 Dutton Avenue S.W.
Birmingham
Jefferson County
Alabama

HABS No. AL-474

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ARLINGTON

This report is an addendum to a 2 page report previously transmitted to the Library of Congress.

Location: 331 Cotton Avenue S.W. (Old Georgia Road), Birmingham, Jefferson County Alabama.

Ownership: City of Birmingham

Date of Construction: c. 1850-1902

Project Information: This report is based upon written documentation donated by the Birmingham Historical Society, reformatted to HABS/HAER guidelines.

DESCRIPTION

This two-story frame residence, with hipped roof and four exterior end chimneys, features a hexastyle portico composed of wooden piers across the front and a center-hall plan. Extensive renovations c. 1902 included replacement of a small balcony over the main doorway with a full-length upper gallery, construction of a pedimented rear portico, installations of Colonial Revival mantelpieces, formation of a single large drawing room, installation of interior plumbing and development of formal gardens.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Built mid 19th century for Judge William S. Mudd (1816-1884) and originally called the Grove, this property was located in Elyton, then the county seat of Jefferson County and an area of prosperous farms. Mudd was a lawyer, legislator, circuit judge. During the Civil War, Arlington served as headquarters for Federal troops dispatched to destroy ironworks in the area. In 1902, Robert Sylvester Munger purchased the house and grounds as a summer retreat. He named it Arlington. Munger restored the house and landscaped the grounds planting cottonwoods, red oaks, hackberries, pecans and at the front, water oaks accentuating the columned facade. Munger, a Texas-born inventor and manufacturer of labor-saving improvements for cotton gins, moved his Dallas business to

Birmingham in 1892. In 1899, he merged his company into the Pratt Gin Company of Prattville, forming the Continental Gin Company, the largest manufacturer of cotton gins east of the Mississippi, with plants in Prattville and Birmingham, both with mills and other plant structures still remaining.

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